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THE
Protestant Religion.

A
SERMON

Preach'd at the

Mayor's-Chapel

IN THE

College-Green, Bristol,

ON

November the 5th 1726.

By WILLIAM GOLDWIN, *Vicar of St. Nicholas*
in Bristol, late Fellow of King's College in
Cambridge.

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THE
SERMON

PREACHED AT THE
SUNDAY SCHOOL

IN THE
College of William & Mary



November the 21st 1726.

By WILLIAM BRIDGES, M.A. Chaplain of the College
in the Chapel of the College of William & Mary

Printed by J. B. Smith, Printer to the College, in the
City of Williamsburg.

Price Six Pence

Peter Day, Esq;

T H E

Right Worshipful the Mayor
of **B R I S T O L**.

S I R,

*AS I could make no reasonable Objections against
Preaching at Your New Chapel, when You laid
Your Civil Commands upon me, so I make no Excuses
for thus appearing in Publick, because I think the
double Deliverance of this Day, and other National
Blessings, can't be too deeply imprinted on the Minds
and Memories of every Protestant, that values our
Branch of Religion, Laws, Liberty and Property;
and tho' every Member of Your Corporation has a
Title to see this Discourse (if it will bear it,) yet
as You fill the Chair of Authority, and are my Parishio-
ner also, I can't Dedicate it to a Person more proper,
than to Your Worship.*

*Indeed the Additional Bounty, granted by Your Mo-
tion and Favour for the Service of the Pulpit, de-
serves a better Acknowledgment than this; but at
present, what can I offer more suitable, tho' but a poor
Return, for a Pulpit Favour, than a SERMON?*

Let.

The Dedication.

Let then even this, in the Name of my Brethren, who are ready to attend the Service of the Mayor's Chapel, so well situated and adorned, be taken as a Sermon of Thanks for Your handsome Augmentation; and let the Usefulness of the Subject, which is the Protestant Religion, let the necessity of reviving that Manner of Spirit now among Us all, atone for its Defects: And though I am satisfied this Discourse, like the Place where it was Preach'd, will have its Recusants, because it publishes some Disagreeable Truths, that don't run in with the Cry of the Great Diana of the — Yet, as it was designed for the Service of the King, Church, and Country, to all which You are a Friend, I venture it into the World for Publick Reading, But beg Leave, by this DEDICATION, to lay it First under Your Eye, and am,

SIR,

Your Worship's

Most Humble Servant,

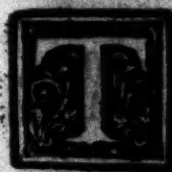
And Parish Minister,

W. Goldwin.



2 Cor. Chap. I. Ver. 10.

*Who delivered us from so great a
Death, and doth deliver: in
whom we trust that he will yet
deliver us.*



THE Primitive Christians, who reaped
no Benefit from the Kingdoms of this
World, having no *national Church esta-
blished by Law*, nor as yet enjoying the
Advantage of *Constantine's Civil Sword*
to defend their Faith, and protect their Persons, had
no Friend but God, no Head of their Body, but *the
one Master Christ*; they therefore lay at their Mercy
of both *Jews and Heathens*, whose very Mercies
were Cruel: And yet amidst all Persecutions and
Plots against them, *Christ's little Flock* found De-
liverance

Deliverance upon Deliverance by the special hand of God, who for his own Glory, for the Name of his Son, and for the Support of *pure undefiled Religion*, has hitherto *shed a Remnant* not only in this Branch of Christ's Vine, but among other *Excellent Nations* also, that would not *bow the Knee to Baal*, a Mercy so great, that whoever regards Truth and Religion here, or the Rewards and Glories of both hereafter, can't think of being a Christian and a Protestant, without paying the constant Tribute of Gratitude and Honour, to whom Honour is due.

But when such *Signal Remembrances* of publick Blessings, return in course, who can be ungrateful to the *Glorious Memory* of this Days double Deliverance from the Hands of the same Enemy, always Warring against *what they call Heresy*, either undermining our Church and State by deep laid Plots, or invading us by open Force? I say, Who can look back either upon the *History of the Reformation*, or within his own Time on the many Conspiracies formed against us, and as frequently disappointed, without wondering, How the *Jesuits* could be so cruelly wicked, or we, tho' unworthy Members of Christ's Church, could so often escape the Snares, had not God *been our Help and Strength in the Time of Need*. *Tis he hath delivered and doth deliver us, and we trust will yet deliver us.* Which Words of St. Paul refer either to some Personal Dangers he met with and escaped in *Asia*, or else they are spoken by way of Comfort,

Comfort, in the Name of the whole Church, to his Fellow Christians and Sufferers, who at that Time laboured under the heavy Yoke of Tyranny and Oppression: Now what their Persecutors and Tormentors were in Fact towards them, the Papists in Principles and Designs are to us: What a Nero might be to St. Paul, the Pope, or Bishop of Rome, is to us; *breathing out nothing but Slaughter* against this Nation in Particular, as standing the Head Stone of the Reformation, and the best Pillar of the whole Building *firmly framed together.*

But as the Apostle owed his Deliverance to God, let this our Nation, which in God's omnipresent Eye may be considered, as a single Person under his immediate Care in this Life, there being no Way of blessing whole National Bodies collectively in another World; when all these Governments *shall be dissolved*, thus Publickly for good Example, thus Annually for Gratitude, acknowledge, That our present Safety is of the Lord: Let Great Britain and Ireland, which taste the Sweets of many Mercies in former Reigns, and humbly expect more from the *Present Family* now set over us, *rejoice in the Lord* for past and present Favours; for it *becometh well such a Nation as this to be thankful.*

The prefatory Way to my Discourse being thus paved, you can't but see my Intention to pay my Share

Share of Regard to this our *Solemn-Feast Day*, is
by laying before you,

First, What mighty and signal Deliverances this
Nation has receiv'd at and from the Time of the
Reformation to this Day.

Then, *Secondly*, I shall excite you to make a good
Use of, and suitable Returns for these National De-
liverances.

And *First*, As the Rock, from whence we were
bew'n, and whereon we stand, I begin with the *Re-
formation*; and great was the Deliverance thereby:
For if Light and Truth are Blessings, then first the
Day broke upon us, and discovered the pious Frauds
of *Popery*: That cleared us from the dark Times
of Ignorance and Errors: That open'd the Scrip-
tures to our View and Understanding, before hid
from our Eyes: That gave Liberty to the Mind
and Conscience of every Christian to read, mark,
learn and judge, before enslaved to *Blind Guides*:
That enabled us to prefer the pure Worship of the
One true and living God, who is a Spirit, before
Pictures and dumb Idols, which can't represent an
immaterial Being: That gave us the *reasonable
Service* of Common-Prayers in our Mother-Tongue,
before lock'd up in an unknown Language, to
which the Unlearned could not safely say, *Amen*:
That restored us the *Cup of Salvation*, of which by
Christ

Christ the Founder's Order, *All* have a Right to drink : That gave us the Communion in both Kinds, Bread and Wine, as being both of equal Sanction by the same Person at the same Time and Occasion, before debarred in Part from the Taste of the *Laity*.

In a Word, the *Reformation* was a Recovery, in a great Measure of the Ancient Rights of the Christian Church, and the better to secure those Priviledges for all Ages, it recovered also the Ancient Right of the *British Throne*; *the King's Supremacy*.

For tho' the *Papacy* hath stolen and usurped that Power, it was originally a Prerogative of our Crown, as appears by a Letter written by a former Pope himself to the first Christian King here; *Lucius*. Part of the Epistle runs thus : " You have with
" you both Testaments, compile out of them by the
" Assistance of God, and the Council of your King-
" dom, a Law, and by it govern your Kingdom,
" for you are the Vicar of God in that Kingdom.
A fair Acknowledgment of the KING of *England*, as
Supreme. What therefore *Rome* once own'd, what
the *Reformation* regain'd, and what our own Church
in its first *Canon*, in its 37th *Article*, and at our
Ministerial Subscriptions for *Orders* and *Institutions*
requires, let no Member of our Constitution deny or
reject : For the true Doctrine, and best Security of
the *Church of England* is the KING at the Top; and
indeed what is a Body without an Head to direct
and

and govern? Such Blessings and Deliverances had we by the *Reformation*: More upon this Subject, may be read in the better Discourses of Archbishop *Usher*, *Jewel*, *Chillingworth*, *Barnet*, and *Hoadley*: But if, after such plain Historical Truths, conveyed down to us from those *Lights on an Hill*, shining so bright before Men, any among us are so ignorant as not to know, That the proper Foundation of our Church was, and is the *King's Supremacy*, or is so bigotted to *Hierarchy*, as to fall off from their *Steadfastness* to the First Principle of our Establishment, I can't but use St. *John's* Words to the Church of *Ephesus*: *I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love, remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the First works*, Rev. 2. xii and xiv V.

For indeed, What is Zeal not according to Knowledge? What is the Word Church, without the Protestant Religion thereof, but as a Sound without Sense, to deceive the Hearts of the Simple? who (*I speak this to their Shame*) grow too *Superstitious in all Things*; and by blindly following, Step by Step, they know not what, insensibly relapse into Old Errors, and are almost fallen into the Ditch.

Who at, and long after the *Reformation*, believ'd or taught private authoritative *Absolution*? which is that presumptuous Sin, that takes away God's Sole Prerogative, that forestalls the Work of the Day of Judgment,

Judgment, that depreciates the All sufficient Merits of Christ's Blood, that destroys the Necessity and Effects of the Lord's Supper, that gives an Handle for a vicious Life, and makes Sinners put their Trust in Man at last? Who in those Days put the Church above the King, which is turning our Constitution upside down? Who then made it a Party-Mark to face about to the East at the repeating the *Apostles Creed*, which being no Prayer nor Invocation to God, but a Declaration of Faith among one another, needs no particular Address to one Point of the Heavens? Who in those Days grew fond of extravagant Altar-Pieces with improper Decorations, (blamed in our *Families*) to draw the Eye of Reverence that Way, as if a real Presence was in that Part of the Church? Who then wanted so much Christian Charity and Knowledge, as to allow no Church or Salvation but to One Branch at Home, as if One single Member could be the whole Body? Who then heard of or saw, that Inconsistent Humour of *Ceasing with-out Praying* for a Protestant King, though his Title to his Throne, and to our Prayers, is his, being the First Protestant Successor in the Royal Line.

I say, our Reformed Church, and those who died Protestant Martyrs for it, before *Laud*, practised no such Superstitious Vanities, as have within these few Years infected the Minds of the People. God restore us to our selves.

Thus

Thus, in a Digressional Way, have I bore my Testimony against some modern Innovations and Corruptions, and, in some Measure, displayed the Principles of our *Reformation*: But there is a farther Vindication necessary, in Answer to the Cavil of the *Romanists*.

For though *Harry* the Eighth, who, after the Courage and Learning of *Luther*, with the Assistance of the then *Elect* of *Saxony* had broke the Ice, carried on this glorious Scheme of Liberty and Truth, was full of his private Passions and Lusts: Yet as God makes both good and bad to be instrumental to his Purposes, turning, as the Psalmist says, *the Fierceness of Man to his Praise*, which was the Case in the Temper and Conversion of *St. Paul*, and in the Quarrel betwixt him and *Barnabas*, the *Papist* base Reflection upon the Rise of our Religion is of no Force: For if that was an Objection, their Church (such as it is) owes all its Powers to the Vices and Cruelties of Emperors and Popes, and the Corruptions of Faith and Religion amongst Men.

But we justify our Separation from their *Idolatry*, and vindicate our *Reformation*, not so much from the Vices, Virtues or Policy of any of our Princes, as from the Word of God in Scripture. The Protestant Religion is built upon that only Infallible Rule,

Rule, we can stand the Test of that Light, they cannot, therefore they hide it from the Vulgar.

It pleased God to work this Nation's Deliverance from the Yoke of Bondage thro' the Hands of a Bold Prince: 'Tis marvellous in our Eyes, but it was the Lord's doing: We therefore rather praise the Divine Goodness, than ascribe it to any human Power on Earth: *For God is wonder'ul among or by the Princes of the World.* Psal. 76. and 12.

The next Deliverance, was not indeed any particular Event, but the whole Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*: She waded through many Difficulties to obtain the Crown, and, when fix'd, she found the whole Power and Malice of the *Jesuits*, almost every Year, plotting against her; a *Spanish* Invasion, intended Poison, and many other Stratagems to destroy her Person and Government, were laid against her: That Reign was a Scene of Wonders, full of wicked Plots, and as full of Conquests and Deliverances: Neither *Deborah*, nor *Judith*, triumphed so gloriously, out of Weakness, (if I may so say.) The Nation was made strong, and its greatest Enemies were defeated by the Hands of a Woman. No Weapon formed against her prosper'd, because God Almighty seem'd purpos'd to carry on that Great Work of True Religion, begun in foregoing Reigns, thro' her Steadiness of Spirit, and an able Ministry

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under

under her Command: For by the Blessing of God, thro' a Series of Plots, she preserved her self and our Religion, which she handed down to her Successor, in whose Reign the Remarkable Event, which distinguishes this Day, broke out.

And here tho' 'tis but Justice to this Occasion, tho' a fair Field-Room is given to declaim against the *Hiquity of the Priests and Jesuits*, the bloody Intention of the Plot, the Extent and Train of its Mischief, if it had taken Fire, the long and deep Contrivance, the Narrowness of the Escape, the Providential Discovery, and other Particulars, which *English History*, and the Prayers of the Day sufficiently show; yet I only mention it in the Course of National Deliverances, according to the Scheme of this Discourse, as a Memorable Instance, wherein God once more interposed at a *Crisis*, which indeed is his Time, to save the whole Protestant Religion from a Deadly Blow: For if *Protestantism* fails here by the Prevalence of *Papery*, the Reformed Churches abroad can't stand long; for which Reason, for our Brethren and Companions Sakes, we should with more Earnestness and Unanimity contend for our Faith against all the Wiles of the Church of Rome; for, as St. Paul said of Satan, *We are not ignorant of their Devices*.

The next Remarkable Occurrence in our History is the *Restoration*, a Deliverance worth our Regard, because it restored us to our selves, and brought a broken Constitution into *Decency and Order*: For though it brought us no new Virtue, (that is not to be learnt in *Popish* Countries) yet the Face of a regular Church and State returned with the *Sovereign Head*; and as that Event was surprising, we must owe it to God, more than Man, and rather extol the Goodness of God for delivering us from a wild Mixture of Strife and Confusions, than magnifie above Measure the fine Qualities of the Prince: And this Providential Return is still of more Consequence to us, because probably without the Government thus returning into its proper Channel, we had not now enjoyed that Valuable Branch of the same *Royal Stock*, the *Protestant House of Hanover*; which naturally, and with Pleasure, leads me to consider another vast Deliverance, that adds a fresh Lustre and Brightness to this Day, the *Grand Revolution* at the Critical Time, when the Ship of State was ready to sink under a high Storm of *Popish* Fury.

I am not superstitious enough to observe the lucky Concurrence of Days in political Events, but let it be remark'd, that as the late Rebellion on each side the *TWEED* receiv'd two Defeats on the same Day; so this Nation receiv'd two great Deliverances as on

this Day, the Discovery of the *Powder-Plot*, and the opening of the *Revolution*: each deserves particular Thanksgiving, but the double Mercy may, without any Superstition, stir up our Minds to repeat our Publick and Private Thanks to God, and redouble the Joy and Gratitude of our Hearts, to that brave and generous *Prince*, who with a poor sickly Constitution underwent the Fatigue of a Winter's Voyage, ventured the Displeasure of near Relations, stirred up the whole exorbitant Power of *France* against him, and sure of much Opposition from many *Adversaries* at his Arrival, yet risked all to save this Nation from Popery and Slavery. And how all things workt together for Good; how Providence brought Mighty Things to pass, by putting down one, and setting up another, by preserving us from a Field of Blood and Desolation, thro' an happy and necessary Exchange, by an *Abdication* on one Hand, and a free Consent and Choice of the Legislature on the other, by saving this Glorious *King William*, when legally settled on the Throne, from Foreign and Domestick Plots and Invasions, I need not now repeat before this ever Loyal and Protestant Corporation, 'tis fresh (and may it be for ever fresh) in all our Memories; the Deliverance in all its Parts is as Glorious and immortal as the *Hero*, who, under God, conducted the whole Enterprize.

But

But even in this, as in all the other Deliverances, we must not give all the Glory to human Schemes, or the *Arm of Flesh*; 'tis the Right Hand of the Lord, says *David*, hath the Pre-eminence. Whatever Blessings therefore we enjoy from such notable Turns, whether it be the free Exercise of Religion, Conscience and Reason; the Advantage of Laws, Liberty and Property, and free Trade, which are the proper Products of a true Protestant Government, let us Rejoice with Innocent Thankfulness in the Day which the Lord hath made; but as the Royal Psalmist said, *Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy Name be the Praise, for thy loving Mercy, and for thy Truths sake.* Psalm 115. and 118.

Thus having laid before You the several Grand Deliverances, which God, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, has been pleased to send us, thro' the Hands of his *higher Powers*, *Henry the 8th*, *Queen Elizabeth*, *James the 1st*, *Charles the 2d*, and *William the 3d*; the next Step in Course would be to the Bright and Victorious Part of *Queen Anne's* Reign, who also kept the Faith, and fought the good Fight against Popish and Tyrannical Measures. God then also went forth with our Armies and Fleets, and more than Once sav'd this Protestant Nation from the Hands of its Enemies.

But

But 'tis Time to come to the Second Thing proposed, which was to excite you to make suitable Returns for these Publick Deliverances.

First then,

Since God has thus blessed us, and *showered the Light of his Countenance upon us* in these Great Events, a Spirit of Gratitude should for ever move in our Hearts, and that Thankfulness should be expressed, not in *Riots and Tumults*, those noisy illegal Joys, that insult publick Justice, and private Peace and Property, but in such Solemn Attendance on the Duties of Religion, as here appear in the *Beauty of Holiness*.

For these State-Holydays are appointed to be kept as the Days of *Purim*, in the Book of *Esther*, for Memorials in Remembrance of Deliverances and absent Benefactors, that, after we have given unto God, the Praise that is God's, we may also praise worthy Men, especially *Kings and Queens* that were, our nursing Fathers and nursing Mothers.

But then the Joyfulness proper for these Occasions, is to be not only in our Lips, but in our Lives: for 'tis Righteousness exalts a Nation, 'tis Justice and Mercy supports true Power, 'tis Quiet, Loyalty, Piety and mutual Charity, that best secure present Blessings

Blessings, and engage Heaven to continue, nay, and increase its Mercies, as St. Peter teaches, 'tis fearing God, honouring the King, and loving the Brotherhood, that makes a right Use and suitable Return for National Deliverances. O! that all, without Distinction, would thus praise the Lord for his Goodness, and declare the Wonders that be-
 hath done, for the past, present, and future Children of this Land.

Further,

As Publick Gratitude is a Moral, a Christian, and a Special Duty upon us of this Kingdom, so, since God has visibly stretcht out his Arm several Times to save us from sinking into Popery, 'tis our Concern not to bring it back again by any Notions, or Attempts, inconsistent with our Laws, Religion, and Oaths.

A Protestant Church must have a Protestant King for its Head and Governour: We want no other Restoration, but that of Fidelity and Affection to both; we want no other Revolution, but one within our selves, an honest and good Heart, to support that of this Day; and we want no Reformation so much, as that of our Lives and Principles. It discovers Want of Knowledge as well as Honesty, to let our Faces towards any View, but the present Settlement, which is as providentially fixed, after several Attempts to prevent

prevent and overturn it, as any of the afore-mentioned Blessings. 'Tis then both our Duty and Interest to support such a King and Church as we now enjoy.

And whoever advances Popish Notions in Doctrine, or teaches for Doctrine the Commandments of Men, whoever engages his Heart or Hand in Plots and Rebellions against this Establishment, contributes his wicked Share towards unhinging the Reformation and Revolution, and, to speak in the Language of the Day, once more lays a mine to blow up the Protestant Religion; 'tis hardly credible, how any that Breathe free *English* Air, could think of involving his Country in Blood and Confusion, or of introducing a Religion, that enslaves the Mind, Body and Estate; yet our Fathers have seen, and we have heard, nay, and felt too one open undeniable Rebellion against the KING, who has given no Provocation.

But here too, as formerly, God, when we were Naked and Defenceless, saved us, yet so as by Fire at *Preston*.

In a Word, whatever Attempts have been, or may be made upon the Protestant Religion, let us remember, that the Strength of the Law, the Tye of Conscience seal'd down with a solemn Oath, the Regard to

to Liberty, the tender concern of Property, with the Concurrence and Assistance of all the Branches of Political Power, are the Supports of the Government: Stand fast therefore in the Liberty, where-with the *Gospel*, the *Reformation*, the *Revolution*, and the *Protestant Succession* hath made you free, and be not, either by Threats or Enticements, again entangled in the Yoke of Bondage, which neither we nor our Reformers could Bear.

Lastly,

Since God, and God alone, has so often defeated the *Popish* Conspiracies, as we, like the *Israelites*, have a particular Reason always to remember our mighty Redeemer, so those that *bear evil will at our Sion*, for the same Reason should expect little Success in any future Projects to restore *Popery* here: For tho' the *Protestants*, and perhaps our selves in particular, for our Ingratitude, Impiety, Perjuries, Lewdness, publick Frauds, and other old *unnatural Vices* reviv'd among us, don't deserve the Continuance of God's Favour; yet Heaven has shined graciously upon us, and showed many providential Tokens in behalf of the Protestant Religion in this Part of Christ's Church.

Now whether it is, that we, as a considerable Trading Island, may be the Means of Propagating the
C true

true Gospel Abroad, or whether it is to convince the *Atbeistical* among us, that *there is a God*, by these publick Deliverances, which none but a *divine Finger* could accomplish, or whether it is to engage us to an Amendment of Life, or whether it is, to overrule Statesmen, who are apt to be wise in their own Conceits, that they may know themselves to be but Men, and that the straitening and enlarging, the saving and destroying Nations, belongs only to the one Law giver, God Almighty, this, I say, we know not, because *who hath known the mind of the Lord, who hath been his Counsellour?*

But this we know, and can boldly tell all Plotters against this Nations Religion and Peace, that God has suffered no Secret Design against the Protestant Religion to take Place as yet.

Let that Consideration, together with a Political Writer's Remark on Conspiracies and Rebellions, that they are, *Conatu difficiles, spe lata, at eventu tristes* — Difficult to Attempt, joyful in Prospect, but dismal or Fatal in the Event, — sink into the Hearts of all Papists and their Adherents, and thence Discourage all New Schemes and Expeditions against Us.

For

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For to conclude as I begun, *God hath delivered us from Death and Dangers,* and doth daily deliver us, *and we trust will yet deliver us.* To whom therefore be all Honour, Power and Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

F E N I S
